THE REMINISCENCES OF

THEODORE FRED KUPER

The Educational Foundation
for the Fashion Industries,
and
The Fashion Institute of Technology.

Oral History Research Office
Columbia University
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Man Who Saved Monticello

Bicentennial Has Personal Meaning for Russian Immigrant

BY MARY BARBER
Times Staff Writer

WHITTIER — In 1891, a young Russian mother led her children from steerage to the deck of their steamship, pointed to the Statue of Liberty and explained why they had come to America.

Theodore Fred Kuper never forgot. At 90 the memory is perhaps even more vivid because it all came true and more, those things his mother told him then.

Two years later Rose Kuper, also at the age of 5, arrived in New York and from the very beginning she felt artistic stirrings. They came true, too.

October will mark the 85th anniversary of Kuper's arrival in America, the couple's 68th wedding anniversary and Rose Kuper's 88th birthday.

And God knows what else.

Fred Kuper, historian, scholar and lawyer, is credited with saving Thomas Jefferson's home, Monticello, for posterity. He became executive manager and counsel of the Board of Education of New York City and then, at an age when other men retire, he was instrumental in shaping the Fashion Institute of Technology out of 10 borrowed rooms in New York's garment district.

He pleads for truth in history, for universal understanding of democracy as Jefferson conceived it, for getting the claptrap out of the Bicentennial and for preparing now for the tricentennial.

"I always considered myself the kid from Moscow," he remembers. "Fred is 1,000 times more than I am," his wife insists.

Rose Kuper, artist, housewife, one-time speech therapist, singer and dancer, has her paintings and collages in at least 15 permanent collections nationwide. She is still producing, her work continually developing and exhibited.

His beloved Monticello in pictures, Jefferson's bust and musty volumes spilling from wall-to-wall bookcases live with her vivid abstractions on giant canvases and in stark chrome frames throughout their Whittier house.

He is in dark suit and tie and she is on the run — always — with voice, hands and feet dancing to an inner rhythm.

This has been a good year for them. No less than Gerald R. Ford expressed his appreciation to Kuper at Independence Day exercises at Monticello.

And it reminded Kuper of his $75-per-week job with a losing foundation that hardly stood a chance in 1923 of fending off developers that were as rapacious then as now.

This was a time of real estate development and Monticello "was a marvelous little mountain to sweep those little buildings off the top," he recalled. "There was a threat to foreclose when we were $150,000 past due.

"Thomas Jefferson was the forgotten man then. People had inherited hatred. There was no interest in saving public places. I witnessed marvelous historic places going to ruin.

He and the foundation's other leaders made it and generations since have been grateful. And in the meantime Kuper, as sometimes befalls historians with a cause, became an authority and champion of all things Jeffersonian.

He had his job with New York City Schools until 1943, then a private practice, and then became counsel of the Legislative Conference of City Colleges of New York, from which the Fashion Institute of Technology was formed.

In 1960 (he was about 75 then) they moved to Whittier and Kuper remained part-time counsel in New York.

But all the while "I continued doing what I could to keep alive the understanding of Jefferson. From 1968 on I devoted funds and time and effort to bring to the Bicentennial an element that was entirely lacking — knowing what it's about."

THEODORE FRED KUPER
Times photo by Steve Rice
The Man Who Saved Monticello

You have a rare opportunity to meet historian Theodore Fred Kuper, the remarkable Russian immigrant who saved Monticello from land developers' bulldozers in the 1920's. He will be in our district Monday, February 28, to share his insights about key ideas in our past which the Bicentennial has overlooked. We have more to celebrate than the Declaration of Independence, according to this sage observer and active participant in American history for 85 of his 90 years. Mr. Kuper will present his fresh view of less famous American documents that contain enduring and timely ideas for adults and children in our schools. You are invited to hear him and ask questions about his chats with Teddy Roosevelt, the vital but little known ingredient of the Northwest Ordinance, and other topics central to the freedoms we enjoy.

For reservations please call Buddy Kelsey, 436-9931, extension 299.

When: Monday, February 28 3:30 p.m.
Where: College Intermediate School
1890 Orange Avenue

Marilouise Kreidler
Dorothy Welch
Publication authorized:
Helen Z. Hansen
Assistant to the Superintendent
PREFACE

These reminiscences of Theodore Fred Kuper refer to the creation and development of the Fashion Institute of Technology, a Community College of the City of New York under the program of the University of the State of New York, together with the creation of the Educational Foundation for the Fashion Industry. The tape recording of these recollections was started on September 29, 1967 by Lionel White, Fashion Institute, serving as recorder for Columbia University Oral History Office and continued from time to time in California by Mr. Kuper until completion on August 15, 1969.
White: Mr. Kuper, tell us how our Fashion Institute was created.

Kuper: One day in the Fall of 1943 Dr. Mortimer Ritter, principal of the Needle-trades High School, phoned me to meet with him and Mr. Max Meyer, chairman of the Needlecraft Commission, the advisory group of that school. They asked what I knew of the plans to have the Board of Education establish a number of post high school technological institutes. All I knew was the Board of Regents Report indicating the great need for technological education on a post high school or college level. I had discussed the problem and the Report with the Chancellor of the Regents and with Dr. Benjamin Fine, Education Editor of the New York Times, also with Dr. Lewis A. Wilson, associate Commissioner of Education who had been urging such a program for years.

Then Mr. Meyer told me their problem was that no provision was being made for such an institute for the garment industry or fashion trades, although Dr. Piggott, associate superintendent in charge of the vocational high school division was getting up a large book with organization plans for eleven post high school institutes to be created by the Board of Education as part of a Statewide plan. I knew nothing about this. No institute was included in that book for the apparel or fashion industries, they told me.

Several days later we met again at the office of Morris W. Haft at 500 Seventh Avenue, for lunch served right there. Mr. Samuel Deitsch also came. Both Haft and Deitsch were members of the high school's Needlecraft Commission. Both were leading cloak and suit manufacturers and Mr. Meyer had been before his retirement.

We all spoke of immigrants having created the garment industry, "Seventh Avenue" as we called it. But they explained that curtailed immigration cut the source of future leaders.

"The industry needs educated technologists as future leaders. Otherwise New York will lose its garment industry," Mr. Meyer said this. And Mr. Haft said,
"We need a college for respect for ourselves and from our children and the public. Honestly I'm ashamed to say I'm a cloak and suiter so when we go to Florida or Europe, I say I'm in the real estate business - I happen to own a few pieces of real estate. You think my son would come into my business after college? Our sons go into other trades or professions, not dress manufacturer or cloaks and suits." Mr. Haft and his brothers had built up a tremendously successful business.

Mr. Meyer said they hoped they could get the garment industry into the Board of Education's book for post high school institutes.

I told them we should wish them luck with that book and not try to get into anybody's book. We could make our own plans.

They asked me to give it some thought and we agreed to meet soon again.

Our next was a luncheon meeting again at Haft's office. This became the real founders' meeting. Besides Haft, Meyer, Deitsch and Dr. Ritter, we were joined by Virginia Pope and Betty Hawley Donnelly. Miss Pope was Fashion Editor of the New York Times, greatly admired by the fashion world.

Betty Donnelly was the spark plug of the Vocational Advisory Board of the Board of Education. As Executive Secretary of the Vocational Board she directed that whole program and was the coordinator between Headquarters and all the trade high schools. Also she was head of the Education Committee for the State A.F.L.

I reported I had gone to Albany and discussed a plan I had with Associate Commissioner Lewis A. Wilson and with Charles Brind, counsel to the State Education Department, and was encouraged by their approval.

My plan was first to incorporate a non-profit educational foundation with power to assist the Board of Education and any other government authority in the creation and maintenance of a fashion institute. Members and the Board of Directors would be from management and labor.

This Foundation would raise funds to help support, and would give live cooperation to the director of the institute, faculty and students.

With such a foundation we could then go to the Board with a constructive request and show willingness to give.

I also reported that Charley Brind said the Regents would welcome such
action by the industry because it was in line with the Regents' great desire for higher technological education. He was confident that the Regents would give us an absolute charter, since I did not want the usual provisional charter which would require us to wait and report each year until after the first five years when the Regents might then grant us an absolute charter.

Dr. Ritter advised that in the beginning all we would require from the Board of Education is the use of several rooms that could then be spared in the high school building and to have the Superintendent assign ten teachers whom Dr. Ritter would select from the high schools. As principal of the High School he would also serve as the director of the institute,

They were all very pleased with Dr. Ritter's advice and approved my plan.

Several days later I drew the petition to the Regents for a Charter and Dr. Ritter and I took it around to the various people who signed as incorporators.

On April 21, 1944, the Board of Regents granted an Absolute Charter incorporating the Educational Foundation for the Apparel Industry as an educational non-profit corporation. Years later we thought it more appropriate to have the Regents change the name of the corporation to Educational Foundation for the Fashion Industries.

A prompt appointment was made for a committee to meet with Mr. Elsworth Buck, then President of the Board of Education. The committee included Dr. Ritter, Max Meyer, Morris Haft and Betty Donnelly. They explained the need to Mr. Buck, gave him a copy of the corporate charter and offered to have the Foundation give cooperation and spend up to $100,000 a year during the first five experimental years if the Board of Education would provide the necessary rooms in the Needletrades High School building and have the Superintendent of Schools assign ten selected high school teachers to serve as the first faculty of the post high school institute, with Dr. Ritter as the Director.

Mr. Buck's immediate comment was "this is the first time we have the offer to give in place of just give me."

A formal contract signed between the Board of Education and the Educational Foundation was authorized by the Board of Education and the Fashion Institute was
In September 1944 the institute opened with 100 high school graduates as its first students, as a post high school institute.

The Foundation decided that every student admitted was to be required to pay no tuition and that teachers assigned to the faculty of the college were each to be paid $1000 per year by the Foundation, in addition to their regular salaries paid by the Board of Education. Remember, at that time the top of the salary schedule for high school teachers was only $4500 a year.

Later Mr. Deitsch attended the Convention in Florida of the Cloak and Suit Recovery Board and succeeded in obtaining a grant of $25,000 which was repeated for several years until the special fund was exhausted.

The Dress Industry Association provided a similar grant of $25,000 for a few years. And the Millinery Industry gave $10,000 a year during those first years.

Both the International Garment Workers and the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, gave substantial donations right from the beginning.

By common accord the institute was not to belong to Management nor to Labor. It was intended to be always a public institution. It was to be supported by public funds controlled by the public authorities. It was to be enriched with the financial support and the live cooperation of both management and labor acting through the Educational Foundation.

Since New York City was the World center of the fashion manufacturing industries and the Institute was intended to help preserve that leadership, it was decided by the Foundation from the beginning to admit students qualified and talented from any part of the United States and even from foreign countries.

Dr. Ritter selected one of his high school administrative assistants as Dean of the Institute with another outstanding member of his high school staff Mollie Slonim to be Assistant Dean.

Miss Snyder's field was high school English with licenses also won by competitive examination to serve as Elementary School Principal and also as administrative assistant in High Schools.
The Dean and Assistant Dean, with the first faculty members, developed the curriculum and program of the institute under Dr. Ritter's direction.

Beyond all this Miss Snyder had the task of dealing with recruitment of staff and even preparing the annual budget for the action of the Board and Dr. Ritter. Fund raising was also part of Dr. Ritter's job with the wonderful cooperation of Max Meyer, Morris Haft and Samuel Deitsch. A constant program of meetings and luncheons was carried out constantly searching for more members and greater financial support for the Foundation.

Sometime in 1945, I think it was, Dr. Ritter had a heart attack. Max Meyer was in the office and on the job every day. I spent as much time as I could to help in dealing with administrative problems and with the fund raising.

We tried out various assistants to work on public relations and fund raising — in a manner helping Max Meyer and me. However none measured up to the requirements.

Finally Samuel Deitsch suggested Miss Shirley Goodman whom Mr. Deitsch and other leaders of the industry had worked with in N. Y. World's Fair project for the Fashion Industry.

From the moment she took charge, we all became her assistants.

Of course Dr. Ritter had recovered sufficiently to be back in command again, but unfortunately he was no more the dynamic forceful leader we knew and worked with throughout the years.

The first basic problem Miss Goodman had to deal with was to find methods to obtain the proper measure of support from the industry. The enthusiasm and devotion of the few who start any such venture, seldom get the support of the main body of leaders during the first trying years of creation and development. When success is assured everyone wants to get on board.

Miss Goodman and Samuel Deitsch won the interest and willingness to help of Mr. Bert Reinitz, the most highly regarded public relations authority in the garment industry and the vital forces of Seventh Avenue.

He studied our problem and pointed out the importance of having the real
interest and cooperation of the executive director of every trade organization in the industry. These were the men who had the confidence of all the manufacturers in the industry so that without their advice and active support we could not succeed.

Bert Reinitz's influence with those men and his personal interest in the Foundation and the Institute brought all of these men to a luncheon and they agreed to work with Shirley Goodman in helping the Foundation achieve its goal.

In 1946 and 1947 the Fashion Institute graduated its first two classes and the numbers seeking admission was about 5 to every place we had open for students.

Then in 1948 Governor Dewey and the Legislature enacted the law creating the State University of New York and a program for two year Community Colleges.

The experiment of a post high school institute for the fashion industries was a proven success. However a separate building was needed to provide more space for immediate and for future needs. Also it was important to give faculty and students the environment of a college — impossible in the midst of a high school building and population.

Mr. Deitsch then conceived the idea of having a building with part devoted to the institute and the rest with modern planned manufacturing lofts to be rented to responsible manufacturers. The apparel manufacturing industries were in dire need for such modern lofts. These would meet the need in part and stimulate greater construction of modern lofts by private builders. If the State would provide such a building for the Institute it would be a great economic stimulus to the garment manufacturing industry and help keep it in New York. At the same time the rentals would help the Educational Foundation to support the Institute.

We had a meeting with Governor Dewey in Albany. He was impressed and interested but he said there were many reasons why the State could not make such an appropriation. However he said that the Board of Trustees of the newly created State University might adopt such a plan as part of its program. He called in Charles Breitel, the Governor's Counsel, and discussed the matter with him. The Governor then instructed Mr. Breitel to draft and have introduced at the current session of the Legislature a Bill to increase the authority of the State University to grant funds, so as to include a post high school institute maintained by a Board of Edu-
cation with the aid of a foundation for an industry chartered by the Board of Regents. The Bill was introduced and promptly passed in the Senate, but a few days before the Legislature was due to adjourn I learned from Lt. Governor Frank Moore that the Bill was being held up in the Rules Committee of the Assembly due to the objection from Charles Tobin, a prominent lawyer in Albany who represented the Catholic Church authorities in New York.

I came to Albany on Saturday and early Monday morning I was in conference with Mr. Tobin. I knew him and respected his ability. It developed that he objected to any amendment to that particular section of the State University Law because it would open the door to many other demands for public funds. We agreed on another section and he and I drafted a new bill. We phoned Mr. Breitel and reported to him that we had both agreed that the new bill should be introduced and the other one abandoned. This was done that Monday night and it passed in both houses, unanimously on Wednesday with the help of a special request from Governor Dewey, just thirty minutes before the Legislature adjourned.

Now came the problem of persuading the State University Trustees to grant funds to our post high school institute.

A luncheon meeting was arranged with the help of Betty Hawley Donnelly who by that time was a member of the Board of Trustees of the State University. Mr. Haft hosted the lunch at the Metropolitan Club on Fifth Avenue.

The State University Trustees were accompanied at the luncheon by Dr. Lawrence L. Jarvie, their Dean for Community Colleges. I had met Dr. Jarvie in Albany when he was in charge for the Regents and State Education Department of the plan for creation of a State University, together with the plan to create State institutes and local community colleges. Then the State University Trustees very wisely gave Dr. Jarvie the responsibility of establishing their program for Community Colleges. The luncheon ended with the Trustees requesting Dr. Jarvie to study our problem and to advise how our request for funds could be granted.

Another luncheon meeting soon followed with Mr. Maxamilian Moss, then president of the Board of Education, and Superintendent of Schools Jansen attending. Dr. Jarvie reported that he could not recommend granting of funds to our post high
school institute. However the Fashion Institute and the educational program of the State would be well served if it became a Community College. Mr. Haft welcomed that recommendation and assured the Trustees that the Educational Foundation could continue to give its cooperation and support. Mr. Moss stated that the Board of Education would agree to be the local sponsor for the Fashion Institute as a Community College.

I raised the question as to whether an amendment to the Community College Law was necessary since under the Education Law the Board of Higher Education had exclusive jurisdiction over city public institutions above the high school level. They did not think any amendment was necessary. However some weeks later we learned that the Attorney General advised an amendment was needed and Albany would handle it. A Bill was introduced and finally we learned that its wording was not adequate. Time had run on and I took over the legislative task. I drafted a Bill, took it to the Governor's counsel, and with his approval it was introduced at the following year's session of the Legislature and passed. So now we had two F.I.T. Laws; Fashion Institute of Technology came to be called by its initials F.I.T.

This last amendment authorized the Board of Education in the City of New York to sponsor a Community College provided it had a technological or vocational curriculum and provided it was partly supported by the Board of Education and partly by an educational foundation for an industry, chartered by the Board of Regents.

In wording the law that way we reserved to the Board of Higher Education exclusive jurisdiction of any community college with an academic curriculum. At the same time we did not wish to open the door for any other industry to pressure the Board of Education to sponsor a Community College, unless it, too, created an educational foundation assuring industry support and cooperation.

Superintendent Jansen recommended to the Board of Education that it sponsor the Fashion Institute as a Community College with the cooperation of the Educational Foundation. The Board of Trustees of the State University approved.

There was another part of the Bill I had drawn which also became law. It provided that in New York City either the Board of Education or the Board of Higher Education, as a Sponsor, could elect to have the trustees of that community college appointed by the Governor and the Sponsor or it could elect that the Sponsoring Board
should be the trustees.

The reason for this was because we did not want to lose the opportunity for F.I.T. to have its own trustees as the law provided for all community colleges. However I knew that the Board of Higher Education wanted to be the Sponsor of F.I.T. and did not want any "proliferation of trustees," as they informed me. I did not want to endanger the passage of our Bill by incurring the opposition of the Board of Higher Education. It so happened that even with that concession to them, the counsel of the Board of Higher Education was instructed to oppose our Bill.

The twenty years experience of F.I.T. with its own Trustees has demonstrated beyond any doubt the tremendous value of having the responsibility of running a Community College entrusted to an independent Board of Trustees. Under the Community College Law, five of the Trustees are appointed by the local sponsor, which for F.I.T. is the Board of Education and the other four by the Governor, - each for a 9 year term.

At the organization meeting of the first Board of Trustees, Max Meyer was elected Chairman of the Board. The Board elected Dr. Ritter as the first president of the college. In accordance with the Community College Law the power to select and employ all members of the staff of the college was delegated to the president, but he had to report all such actions to the Board. This was an important action to assure the integrity of the professional head free from any interference from trustees.

In September, 1948, our four year old post high school institute became a community college and was soon empowered by the Board of Regents to grant the degree of Associate in Applied Science.

Of course we had to stage a formal dedication of New York City's first Community College. Shirley Goodman took charge of planning the exercises and she did a wonderful job. Messages were received from Presidents of many colleges and some were represented in the academic procession. And Shirley Goodman also arranged so that the officers and members of the Educational Foundation all wore cap and gown and followed in the academic procession. This had a tremendous effect on these men from industry and labor. The next day Mr. Fairchild, publishers of Women's Wear, told me that one of the leading manufacturers met Fairchild on Seventh Avenue the next day. "Wasn't it wonderful, yesterday?" the man asked. "For forty years I was
ashamed to say I was in Cloaks and Suits and yesterday we wore college cap and gown." And Fairchild said there were tears in the man's eyes.

Governor Dewey, President Burich and Dr. Carmeichel, Chairman of the Trustees of the State University, came from Albany. Dr. Jarvie served as Marshall. It was a great program for Seventh Avenue. Governor Dewey's mother was in town from her home in Michigan and we had her as our guest.

Our first set back was when Dr. Ritter died. The Board of Directors asked Max Meyer to serve as President during the search for a successor. Mr. Haft was elected Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the College and a committee was appointed to seek a worthy president. Then Mr. Meyer died and Mr. Deitsch was elected president pro tem. By that time Shirley Goodman was pressed more and more into accepting added responsibilities, so that fortunately, by then she was the de facto executive head of the College in addition to building up the Foundation and conducting the public relations and fund raising.

The Board's committee sought Dr. Jarvie's advice and urged him to accept election as President of F.I.T. He declined because he wished to complete his Community College program for the State University. However, he recommended Dr. Lawrence L. Bethel, president of the New Haven Junior College at Yale University. Dr. Bethel had considerable experience with two year colleges. He had been president of the National Association of Junior Colleges. Of all the persons considered the Board selected Dr. Bethel.

Soon Dr. Bethel decided the College was too crowded in its quarters and that the high school was not the place any more for our college. I told him and Miss Goodman that it took never less than fifteen or twenty years for a high school to get a new building and that it was a heart breaking job. Dr. Bethel was determined and Shirley Goodman said we must do it.

The building campaign was on and we went to work with Shirley as campaign manager. It was not difficult to get the Board of Education to start the ball rolling and request appropriations because the high school register had grown and the rooms we were using were needed for the high school students.
Shirley Goodman got things started with the City Planning Commission and Dr. Bethel had the support of the State University Trustees.

The Capital Budget for land, building and equipment, under the Community College Law were to be borne one half by the State and the other half by the City.

The time came to engage the interest of the Mayor in order to move the project with the speed we needed.

Miss Goodman arranged a meeting at the Mayor's office. For that meeting she prepared Haft to explain the importance of the Fashion Industry to New York and its economy. Then our trustee, Isidor Nagler who was Vice President of International Garment Workers, was to emphasize the importance to labor. Dr. Bethel was to follow with the need for the college and someone from the Board of Education would tell of the overcrowding of the high school.

When the Mayor came into his room he found himself surrounded by leaders of the industry and of labor, beside those from the college.

Miss Goodman presented Mayor Wagner with a brochure explaining the need of the college for its own building. Then Mr. Haft promptly gave the highlights of the economic and employment importance of the industry to New York.

Before anyone else could proceed, Mayor Wagner said "Are you people trying to sell me on the garment industry?" Then he looked at me and said, "Kuper, you know that when I was a boy my father took me to Seventh Avenue and I learned all this from him." Then he turned to Miss Goodman, "Shirley, where does the matter stand?"

From then on, Mayor Wagner was in charge. He called in his secretary and assistants and gave them instructions to follow through and report to him.

He understood our need and assured us of his interest and support.

Much still had to be done with the Board of Education, the City Planning Commission, the Board of Estimate, the State University officials and the State Architect. There were technicalities, red tape and real problems. Of course there were setbacks but Shirley Goodman and Dr. Bethel made progress.

One of the big problems was the higher cost because we could not accept locations in outlying sections of the City. The building had to be within the Seventh Avenue or garment industry area. The closeness made the difference between theoretic
and practical technology.

By this time Charles Silver became President of the Board of Education. He became a Trustee of our College. He had been President of the American Woolen Company, was retired, devoted his time and money to education and philanthropy. He was President of Beth Israel Hospital. He was experienced with problems of construction of public buildings, became very helpful to us.

Finally our building was built on the site we wanted, and it was equipped and furnished as we wanted it, with Shirley Goodman really planning the interior furnishings.

In due course we moved out of the high school building and into our own new home on West 27th Street in the middle of the block between Seventh and Eighth Avenues.

There were two more major problems left to be solved. One was with respect to the status of the faculty and the other getting a needed dormitory.

We were still using teachers on the Board of Education's high school payroll and repaying the Board from the College's operating budget.

Dr. Bethel insisted that the College must have a faculty employed directly by the College. We solved that problem by drafting a Bill for an amendment to the Education Law. This was enacted as the F.I.T. Tenure Law. It took care of selection of staff members, tenure with provision for proper hearings and grounds for dismissal. Much of this followed the tenure law for the City Colleges. We also provided that the then employed high school teachers who elected to accept employment with the college would have to resign from the Board of Education but we protected them with tenure already earned and with the right to continue in the same city teachers retirement system.

Still another serious staff problem had to be solved. What pension system covered those who had not been employees of the Board of Education? The New York City Retirement System covered teachers employed by either the Board of Education or the Board of Higher Education. Other employees of either Board were covered by the City Employees System. F.I.I. would not be employees of either of those Boards. However since the Board of Education was the Sponsor that legally created and maintained our
College, I felt that our people belonged to either of the City's Pension Systems. But there was so much failure to understand the legal status of the new Community Colleges, F.I.T. was the first in the City, that I did not wish to have our staffs subjected to such legal doubts as to their pensions. However, the Legislature had amended the laws governing the State teachers and the State Employees Pension Systems by expressly adding staff members of community colleges to the list of those eligible for membership. Under that provision we could have F.I.T. staff covered by the State Teachers Retirement System. The Secretary of that Board agreed with me. That solved the problem.

Now with regard to dormitory. The original concept of Community Colleges was that they were in the students' neighborhood so that the less mature first two year college students could live at home. But F.I.T. attracted so many students whose homes were out of the City, in other States and foreign countries that student housing became a vital need.

Mr. Silver had had experience with the Federal Agency that lent funds to hospitals, colleges, etc. for needed housing. Under his guidance we were able to apply for a loan sufficient to cover cost of land and building construction. However there was a snag. Such a loan then was not available to a City or its Board of Education. Community colleges had not been made corporate bodies by the failure of the law to use express words to that effect. I disagreed because the law expressly empowered the Trustees of any Community College to acquire real and personal property, maintain it and conduct the business of the college. There was no time to resolve such a technical doubt. Fortunately we found a provision in the Federal Law that such loans could be made directly to the college or to a corporation created by the college for that express purpose. That is exactly what we did. We created the F.I.T. Dormitory Corporation and provided that the same nine persons who were trustees of the college would be the nine members of the Board of Directors of the non-profit corporation.

The location selected was across the street from the college - land then occupied by disgraceful slum buildings. Our dormitory was built. The International Garment Workers contributed the major funds for the furnishings. The building was named Nagler Hall after a vice president of that Union who had served until his death.
as a trustee of the College. At the dedication exercises of the dormitory, David Dubinsky emotionally compared the early days of labor and management strife to the present when management labor and the public dedicated the first public college building with the name of a labor leader.

There was still the problem as to how the college would operate three vital services for students and faculty, - the student bookshop, the student and faculty dining facilities and the utilization of college facilities by outside units for plays, concerts, meetings, etc. Most of these are conducted in the high schools by the school's staff under direction of the principal and custodian. All of these facilities were provided primarily for the benefit of the students and faculty. Moreover it was their money that would be the income of both the shop and food service. A college can contract with a management firm to conduct these services. Instead we created another non-profit corporation, F.I.T. Student Faculty Corporation with a board of directors including two directors each from the student body, the faculty and from the college administration. Policy was established by the Board of Trustees. The management of these services was turned over to the Student Faculty non-profit corporation.

Experience over the years has demonstrated in many ways beyond our expectations the administrative and educational value of this arrangement.

We had another setback. Dr. Bethel died. The Board of Trustees again called on Samuel Deitsch to serve as President pro tem and it elected Shirley Goodman as Executive Vice President.

Again there was the search for a President. Board members recalled their first choice and again communicated with Dr. Jarvie. In the intervening years he had enriched his already very broad experience. After completing his work as Dean of the Community Colleges of the State University, he served for several years as president of another community college in New York from which post he was called by Flint, Michigan to head the comprehensive educational program of that city.

This time our Board succeeded. Dr. Jarvie accepted. It was like a godfather coming in to take charge of his godchild. He brought a new vigorous leadership to the college. The twenty years development from an experimental post high
school institute in a high school building with high school teachers, to a community
college in its own building required an objective review and reorganization. Dr.
Jarvie accepted the challenge. Among major problems Dr. Jarvie had to deal with - the
unionization of the professional staff, - a first public college to do so in New
York, - and the bargaining of a first contract. Dr. Jarvie handled the problem
successfully and constructively, without strife.

Then too, Dr. Bethel and Shirley Goodman had done a tremendous job in
starting an expansion program for much needed additional buildings, dormitory and
campus. During the years of planning, conditions changed. Dr. Jarvie reviewed the
whole program enriched by his fresh point of view.

Everyone of us and the trustees, too, were happier than ever with his strong
and friendly leadership.

April 21, 1969 marked the twenty-fifth anniversary of the granting of the
Absolute Charter by the Board of Regents creating the Educational Foundation. On that
anniversary day Dr. Jarvie presided at public exercises for the groundbreaking for
the first new building. The City and State expanded the campus so it will include
the entire square block bounded by Seventh and Eighth Avenues, Twenty Seventh and
Twenty eighth streets together with most of the next block between Twenty Seventh
and Twenty Sixth Streets. One double building will span the two block front from 26th
to 28th Streets on Seventh Avenue. It will be a monument to the immigrants and their
successors who created a great industry and made Seventh Avenue a name internationally
regarded as a demonstration of American freedom of opportunity and enterprise.

The estimated capital cost for the expansion program is $45,000,000, to be
provided equally by the State and the City. This will provide the added land, build-
ings, equipment and furnishings. The Educational Foundation is raising two funds of
$10,000,000 each to provide added resources not obtainable through public budgets.

The added funds are needed to maintain the technological, educational and
cultural standards the Foundation has already established for the college - and also
to assure scholarship funds for the students of future years.

So far I have limited myself to highlights, I am sorry I have omitted
naming so many others who were the founders and pioneers. Many more important facts
regarding the birth and development of F.I.T. over the quarter century should be recorded.

But I must add this touch. I induced the architects to include in their plans a serpentine brick wall reminiscent of the one Thomas Jefferson designed and built for gardens of the University of Virginia. F.I.T.'s serpentine wall borders the shrubs alongside the front entrance to the college building on Twenty-Seventh Street.

I live now in Whittier, California in semi-retirement but I still continue to serve as Counsel to the Educational Foundation and as Administrative Consultant to the College.